

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 28 No. 6

June 15, 1960

Whole No. 333



Cover of a Brave and Bold Weekly sketched by R. Emmett Owen

DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #13 BRAVE AND BOLD

Colored cover weekly, 8x11 inches, 32 pages. One of Street & Smith's "big five". 429 issues, December 27, 1902 to March 11, 1911. Reprinted stories from Norman L. Munro's Golden Hours and Street & Smith's own Good News. Later issues reprinted stories from earlier weeklies such as Might and Main, Bowery Boys Library and Motor Stories.

Report on Robert Emmett Owen

Illustrator of Street & Smith Publications

by Ralph Adimari

When R. Emmett Owen died in New Rochelle Hospital on September 14, 1957, virtually in my arms since I lived no more than a mile away, with him died the entire illustrating and art history of Street and Smith, former publishers of the famous Tip Top Library later named Weekly. In and around 1954 I had an interview with Mr. Owen because I knew he had illustrated boys' cloth covered books such as the Dave Porter series by Edward Statemeyer, the Allen Chapman series of Alger type stories, some 15 of them for Cupples and Leon and others but never did he claim illustrating for Street & Smith.

In making a recheck of J. Edward Leithead's articles in the Round-up I came across his statement to the effect that W. Bert Foster had written the Motor Stories for Street & Smith and that R. Emmett Owen had illustrated them. Since Owen had not verified this I began a search for available data. The discovery of Leithead's statement about Owen was in a back issue, December 1938 and it had escaped my mind in the interview circa 1954. It was in 1957 that I made the rediscovery but by the time I had made any progress on the subject, Mr. Owen was already dead.

Then I found that he had illustrated some Tip Top Weekly issues from perhaps 1908 to its end about 1915. In his interview with me the artist declared, "I have gotten away from illustrations and spend my hours on landscapes." He added, "This is my future work" waving to a group of landscapes bunched up on the north side of his studio which was once the home of Thomas Paine of Revolutionary War fame, that is the Memorial House since another family occupies Paine's former home. Upon my pressing the issue of boys' books he was evasive and sullenly turned to his painting of another landscape before him. At this interview if I had known he had illustrated Tip Top Weekly I would never have gone away without some concrete statements from him. Without knowledge one is helpless. Knowledge, thorough and complete is what firms up a foundation.

Despite the fact that Leithead had made the initial error in his statement: W. Bert Foster did not write the Motor Stories for Street & Smith, William Wallace Cook did, and Owen according to Stanley Pachon did not illustrate them (all Owen illustrations are signed R. Emmett Owen

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Ralph F. Cummings, Fisherville, Mass.

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with year painted) so I concluded Leithead meant the Foster stories of Motor Boat Boys for Donahue of Chicago. They were written under the pseudonym of Louis Arundel. Neither have I confirmed they were illustrated by Owen since I own none.

Then came the discovery that Owen had illustrated the cover of Tip Top Weekly No. 808 issued Oct. 7, 1911 with story, Frank Merriwells' Boy. It is signed as usual R. Emmett Owen 1911 the way he did everything else. I have made today and did make a study of Owen's art years ago and concluded that whatever greatness adheres to him will come from his Street and Smith illustrations and other book work. His landscapes and covered bridge paintings will not compare with his illustrative art, even though the covered bridge art may be genuine Americana. Good as they are his illustrative work done before he was forty have the fire and fervor of youth. His work is so strong that it can be recognized without looking for his signature. His widow, Mrs. Miriam Owen however agrees with her late husband and esserts his best work began after he was forty. Since she married him about 1920 she did not know about his Tip Top work. She had a vague idea he had illustrated some boys' books and magazines but her knowledge of him is that he was principally a landscape and covered bridge artist. After a while she paused and looked me in the eye and said.

"Wait and see, perhaps he may have left some of his works upstairs," Mrs. Owen then went upstairs and came down with some material which proved to be:

1. Covers of 3 Top Notch Magazines all illustrated by him. Vol. 2 No. 5, November 1, 1911. The other two contained no date but may have been within the year 1911 or thereabouts.

2. Covers of New Fiction Series No. 15 published by Street & Smith. Title is Adrift in the Unknown by William Wallace Cook, circa 1911-12.

3. She also showed me 15 covers

illustrated by Owen before 1920 for Cupples and Leon all by Allen Chapman in the Alger type series put out at the time. Mrs. Owen did not know if he had illustrated the Railroad Ralph stories also by Allen Chapman. Incidentally, this pseudonym was once used by Edward Stratemeyer but later shared by his syndicate.

This interview with Mrs. Miriam Owen was on August 23, 1959, and she told me she knew nothing about his book and magazine illustrations except what she put forth before me. She was not aware of the Tip Top, Buffalo Bill and Nick Carter cover illustrations and in fact doubted them. She spoke of them as though they disparaged the artist who had illustrated them. To confirm her statements, the obituary in the New York Times (which boasts of all the news that's fit to print) fails to note his magnificent book and magazine illustrations at all. The notice of his death was published next day, Sunday, September 15, 1957, Page 84 C7 (Main Section). It says Owen was "known for his New England landscapes," was the first artist to have his own one man gallery in New York. He operated it on West 52nd Street until 1917. He exhibited at Dartmouth and Mount Holyoke Colleges. "Received his early training at the Eric Pate school in Boston." He was born in 1878. Nothing about his other work before 1917.

In the years that I owned many Nick Carter flat sized libraries as well as Buffalo Bill I have a vague notion that Owen illustrated many of them besides the Tip Top Weekly. Had it not been for my vague knowledge we could have had much information from Owen in the years before his death. These are one of those unfortunate cases that come up to give us a feeling of utter sadness.

For those who are interested in covered bridge paintings there are a few available for sale and can be purchased from Mrs. R. Emmett Owen, Thomas Paine Memorial House, New Rochelle, New York.

(Editorial note: A review of the Street & Smith publications in my collection has revealed that the following issues bear signed illustrations of R. Emmett Owen. There may be many more in which his signature was obliterated by the publishers:—Tip Top Weekly No. 763, Nov. 26, 1910; No. 796, July 15, 1911; No. 808, Oct. 1911. Buffalo Bill Stories No. 544, Oct. 14, 1911; No. 546, Oct. 28, 1911; No. 547, Nov. 4, 1911. Brave and Bold No. 402, Sept. 3, 1910; No. 408, Oct. 15, 1910; No. 415, Dec. 3, 1910; No. 424, Feb. 4, 1911.)

WANTED

November and December, 1910, January, February, and August, 1911, issues of ADVENTURE. Also need various issues of ALL-STORY between 1910 and 1920; ARGOSY between 1911 and 1920; BLUE BOOK between 1906 and 1938; POPULAR between 1910 and 1931; PEOPLE'S between 1910 and 1928; TOP-NOTCH between 1910 and 1937. Contact me and I'll send "want" list.

Edward W. Hartung
630 W. Upsal St., Phila. 19, Pa.

Writers for Golden Days

by Stanley A. Pachon

No. 1 — Frank H. Converse

Frank H. Converse, one of the more popular writers for boys in the 1880's was born at Damariscotta, Maine, February 19, 1843. He was the son of John H. and Mary A. (Counce) Converse. Young Converse was educated at the Academy at Newcastle, Maine and after completing his education he worked with his father, Judge of Probate Court held at Wiscasset, Maine.

His first contributions were to the Portland Transcript and after his twentieth year he devoted himself exclusively to writing. He began contributing to the Sunday School papers of his day and to other periodicals both stories and poetry which always had a ready sale. His first juvenile story is said to have been published in the Illustrated Christian Weekly. Many of his stories and sketches and some poetry appeared in The Christian at Work, Christian Union, Independent, Harper's Young Folks, Wide Awake, Youth's Companion, Beadle's Saturday Journal, St. Nicholas and many others.

In 1874 he married Miss Mary Elizabeth Acorn of Newcastle, Maine. Some time in 1881, Converse, who had been in poor health most of his life, decided to move to a milder climate and still be close to the various publishers, chose Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1882 he lived at 64 Mill

St., Germantown, and in 1883 the last year of his sojourn in Philadelphia he lived at 244 South 8th St. That same year (1883) he moved to Malden, Mass., where he spent the remainder of his life except for two short trips to the west. The first when he visited his elder brother William H. Converse who had settled at Newton, Kansas, and the second in the spring of 1889 when he made a trip to Oklahoma hoping that the change of climate would improve his health. His condition did not improve and after his return to Malden became progressively worse and after a lingering illness of about a year he passed away at his home at 7 Rockland Ave., Malden, Mass., on Dec. 13, 1889. His death was caused by a complication of diseases of the heart, lungs and stomach. He was buried at Forestdale cemetery.

His first book was "The Adventures of Thad." D. Lothrop. Boston 1886. A frank imitation of Algers' theme of a poor newsboy and his rise to success. Besides this his other published books were:

"A Voyage to the Gold Coast." Munsey, N. Y. Sept. 1887.

"That Treasure." Munsey, N. Y. Aug. 1888.

"Mystery of a Diamond." Munsey, N. Y. Feb. 1888.

"In Southern Seas." Munsey, N. Y. Dec. 1888.

"Van." U. S. Book Co., N. Y. Aug. 16, 1890.

"Lost Gold Mine." Penn, Philadelphia, 1896.

"Heir to A Million." U. S. Book Co. July 5, 1890.

"Gold of Flat Top Mountain." Street and Smith, N. Y.

"Happy-Go-Lucky Jack." U.S. Book Co., N. Y. Aug. 9, 1890.

These were often reprinted over the years by various publishers.

The majority of his stories deal with the Sea and ships, but after his short visits to the west and a great deal of careful research, he wrote a number of rather different stories of the west and southwest. For a number of years prior to his death, he wrote almost exclusively for Golden Days and the Golden Argosy. The first volume of Golden Days carried two serials by him. It is curious to note that after he had contributed a serial to the first volume of the Golden Argosy he did not contribute anything new there until 1886 when he had ceased to write for Golden Days in the same year. It may be correctly assumed that James Elverson had him under an exclusive contract which after Converse's single appearance in the pages of the Golden Argosy was rigidly enforced. Munsey, due to his inability to secure additional stories from Converse reprinted the same serial in the second volume of Golden Argosy. After his return to the pages of the Golden Argosy in 1886 he contributed an additional eight serials as well as a great many short stories and sketches. As far as it is possible to learn, Converse never used a pen name although a number of his earlier short stories were, after his death, reprinted in the Argosy under the initialism of "F. C."

His stories were all well written and interesting. He had the happy faculty of choosing catchy titles and selecting interesting plots for his stories. He had a steady following for his stories among the young peo-

ple of his day. This demand for his stories earned for the author a good living during his lifetime.

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

P. O. Box 436, Fisherville, Mass.

Well, the nice weather is coming back to us again, of which we are all very glad to see it, you bet, and lots of fellows that like to travel, and look at other peoples collections, other than their own, also do some buying here and there, and so on.

Who has the story "Broker Barry's Messenger Boy or the Bulls and Bears of Wall Street by Harry K. Ford. It is believed it came out in Happy Days Nos. 1866, May 20, 1917 and was continued in other issues. Wm. B. McCafferty would like very much to get that story.

Lou Kohrt of Houston, Texas, expects to take a trip up this way around May 20th, and to also visit several of the other fellers up here, Le Blanc, Wakefield, Smith, Messier and others if he has the time.

F. A. Beverly, Lauderdale, Miss., wants Golden Hours between No. 250 and 500. Who has them?

Have you seen the Westerners Brand Book, I think it's very interesting, but why do they call it the Westerners Brand Book when it is only a 8 page, 2 col. magazine is what gets me. Still, I suppose Mr. Russell could ask me the same question on Ralph's Old Timers Mart—which is only a 12 page ad sheet. Guess I have it coming. The Brand Book has no advertising, only reading, so I guess that answers the purpose.

Ralph Smith says the Roundup seems to be getting more interesting with each issue, and says for Ed to keep up the good work.

Does any one want any old back numbers of Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup from Numbers 1 to 237 inclusive, ads or the complete run up to that number. Many of them have been reprinted, but there's a wonderful lot of fine reading in those old issues and surely if Ed has sup-

plied you with Nos. 238 up, you'll surely want the old nos. to go with them. Drop me a letter or card, and let me know what numbers you need.

Henry Stinemetts of Hemet, California, has decided to keep his collection of fine old Beadles Dime and Half Dime Libraries.

Col. Charles D. Randolph (Buckskin Bill) had almost a full page writeup in the "Sunday Times Democrat" for Des. 20th, 1959, on page 6D, published at Davenport-Bettendorf, Iowa. Has 3 illustrations, one a small one of himself, another showing a picture he is holding of Beadles Half Dime Library, framed of "Buckskin Bill," and the third one of himself dressed up in Buckskin and hip boots, or next door to it as I see they go between the knee and his hips. The title of the article is "Buckskin Bill—A Son of the Wild West." Sure is a very fine article, Bill. Tells of Buckskin Bill's collection of Buffalo Bill material of all kinds, Buffalo Bill Stories (old 5c weeklies) and what not. Bill is a wonderful collector along those lines. He loves to have and read of the adventures of Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill, Bandbox Bill, Texas Jack, Calamity Jane, etc.

Adios—Reckless Ralph Cummings

WANTED

Magnet Library #109, "Blackmail"
by HANCOCK

Write

Mrs. E. N. Wood
16603 Turner, Detroit 21, Michigan

Special overrun printing of 200 copies
The AMERICAN BOOK COLLECTOR
March, 1960

The featured story is:

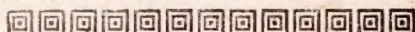
BUCKSKIN SAM:

RANGER and WRITER
(Biographical sketch plus a bibliographical list)

Order from the author—

\$1.00 postpaid

J. C. DYKES
4511 Guilford Rd., College Park, Md.



WANTED

Beadle's Dime Library, no. 477
Secret Service, nos. 189 and 221
Fame and Fortune, nos. 27 and 181
Boys of America (Street & Smith),
nos. 35-40

Will pay cash or give good trade

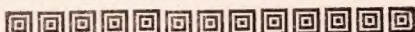
FOR TRADE

Liberty Boys of '76, nos. 1, 85, 91
Young Klondike, nos. 24, 31
Jesse James Stories, no. 73
Young Glory, no. 15
Buffalo Bill Stories, no. 5
Might and Main, no. 2
Frank Reade Weekly, nos. 10, 11, 12
Secret Service, nos. 156, 201, 208, 209
211, 235
Nick Carter Weekly, no. 316
Blue and Gray, nos. 1, 25, 30
Rough Rider, nos. 29, 104
Tip Top, nos. 438, 452
Work and Win, no. 289
Tousey's novel catalog, 1899
Catalog of O'Brien sale of dime novels, priced.

Condition mostly good to fine,
a few are fair to poor.

W. R. Johnson

416 Wheeler St.
Ardmore, Oklahoma



NOTE THE LOW PRICES ON THESE RARE ITEMS

TIP TOP & NEW TIP TOP WEEKLY: You will never have another chance to get the original stories of the Merriwells in good condition at such low prices. Can supply hundreds. 200 to 264 only \$1.25 each; 265 to 800 50c to \$1.00 each. Complete set New Tip Top (136 issues) only \$75.00. Plenty of extra New Tip Tops at only 50c each.

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COMIC LIBRARY: The original funny weekly with the outrageous covers in black and white: 10 26 31 18 27 30 34 55 63 70 71 80 96 108 122 129 131 135 136 139 157 133 140 143 to 147 152 157 to 162 166 to 171 174 175 177 179 to 182 185 to 192. Also the following Muldoon comics in Wide Awake Library: 784 933 967 983 1107. Condition ranges from only fair to good; prices range from 50c each to \$1.25 each. Write for further information if interested.

BUFFALO BILL BORDER STORIES: The reprints in book form of the famous Buffalo Bill Stories: All in good condition with good covers: 13 to 17 20 to 29 34 35 36 39 41 to 49 54 to 59 61 to 64 67 68 70 to 95 98 to 101 104 107 to 116 118 120 to 123 125 126 127 129 to 139 144 147 to 150 152 to 160 162 to 165 167 to 182 184 to 196 199 201 to 205 207 to 209. 65c each; 5 for \$2.75.

BEADLE'S POCKET LIBRARY: 12 27 45 46 48 49 93 117 118 194 250 275 289 340 387. Sensational stories and covers. Each only 90c or 5 for \$4.

WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY: A large bound volume containing the complete run of 48 Harkaway tales from No. 1225, and all Dick Lightheart stories from No. 154 to 1260 printed in this library, 55 issues in all. Upper corners clipped, otherwise in good condition throughout. The best chance you will ever have to acquire the complete careers of the Harkaways and Dick Lightheart in Wide Awake Library, with 55 full-page illustrations. Nice solid volume bound in green cloth with gold lettering. \$30.00

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FRANK MANLEY'S WEEKLY: The continuation of and similar to YOUNG ATHLETES' WEEKLY. Complete set of 32 issues in a companion volume to the one described above. All with covers. \$27.50

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J. P. GUINON

P. O. Box 214

Little Rock, Ark.

DIME NOVELS—OLD MAGAZINES—PAPERBACKS

Jack Harkaway novels. Various editions. Some thick S. & S. Harkaways, and Wide Awake Library Harkaways, 10 for \$5.00.

Merriwells in thick S. & S. paperbacks, \$1.00 each. Frank Merriwell Juniors at 75c each.

Complete sets of the following: Bowery Boy, Three Chums, Red Raven, Tip Top, New Tip Top, Nick Carter Stories, American Library (similar to Saturday Library), Deadwood Dick (Ivers), All Sports, Motor Stories, My Queen. Also, single copies of most of these in stock.

West, Lariat, Short Stories, Ace High, Triple X, Fame & Fortune, Cowboy Stories, Star Western, Western Trails, Far West, Northwest, Wild West, Action Stories, Sport Story, Thrilling Western, Quick Trigger, St. Nicholas, All Story, Munsey, and others, mostly at 50c each. Send want list.

The Parisian Dream City (1900). Paris World's Fair in 20 parts (13½x11 inches). Over 300 full page photographic views. The set, \$2.50.

Large size, around 1916-1919: Work and Win, 50c each. For OUR selection, 14 for \$5.00. Pluck and Luck, 75c to \$1.25. For OUR selection, 8 for \$5.00. A few Jack Wrights at \$1.25 each.

Buffalo Bill novels, thick S. & S. paperbacks. \$1.00 each.

New Magnet Library (Nick Carter) Later numbers, 75c each. A lot of 40 different for \$20.00.

Bound to Win Library. Various prices. Sample copy, \$1.00.

Might and Main. Long run in excellent condition, \$1.50 each.

Ladies Treasury. Bound volumes with folding fashion plates. 1894 back. 12 numbers to volume. \$5.00 each. Fine condition.

Argosy. Golden Argosy. Many volumes on hand.

Young Athlete's Weekly. Frank Manley's Weekly. \$1.25 each.

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Oliver Optic paperback novels, fair, 4 for \$1.00.

Punch (London comic magazine). \$1.00 per dozen.

Old Sleuth's Own. Original Parlor Car edition. Fair. 8 for \$1.00.

Book. Allen: Flute & Violin, and other Kentucky Tales. 1899. \$1.00.

Wide Awake Library #1278 The Sea Fiends. A submarine novel. \$2.00.

Golden Hours #79 to 156 Bound. \$50.00. #259 to 268, \$5.00. #495 to 501, \$3.50. Monthly numbers, 1904-1912, 4 for \$1.00.

Western World (1871) Vol. 12, 13, 14 (26 nos. each). \$5.00 per vol.

N. Y. Ledger, folded in quarters, Vol. 38 39 42 37 40. \$10.00 each.

Work and Win \$1.50 each 11, 14 in fine condition.

Fireside Visitor 1877, 1878. All stories complete. 50c per issue.

Postpaid.

Subject to prior sale.

RALPH P. SMITH

Box 985

Lawrence, Mass.